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Adm. Souers Dies at 80; Helped Set Up the CIA

Rear Adm. Sidney W. Souers, a close friend of the late President Harry S. Truman who played a primary role in setting up what became the Central Intelligence Agency, died Sunday in St. Louis. He was 80.

Adm. Souers entered the hospital Saturday. He had been in ill health for some time.

He was a former board chairman of General American Life Insurance Co., in St. Louis.

ADM. SOUERS was born in Dayton, Ohio, in 1892. He attended Purdue University and was graduated from Miami University at Oxford, Ohio, in 1914. Before World War II, Adm. Souers was involved in banking, life insurance and a wide range of other business activities.

He was appointed a lieutenant commander in the Naval Reserve in 1929. Called to active duty in 1940, Adm. Souers served as an intelligence officer in several Naval District commands and, while with the 10th Naval District in San Juan, Puerto Rico, also was intelligence officer of the Caribbean Sea Frontier during World War II.

In July 1944 he became assistant director of the Office of Naval Intelligence here and, in November 1945, was designated deputy chief of Naval Intelligence with the rank of rear admiral.

In January 1945, Adm. Souers was appointed director of central intelligence in the National Intelligence Authority, which later became the CIA. He left active duty in 1946.

HOWEVER, at the request of Truman, Adm. Souers became executive secretary of the newly created National Security Council in 1947, and remained in that job until 1950.

Still functioning as a special consultant to Truman, Souers after leaving the NSC blasted the Subversives Control Act passed by Congress and warned that the wave of anti-communism "contains the seeds of danger."

He said that unrestrained and indiscriminate anti-Communist activity could be as dangerous to American liberties as anything the Communists could do. We have no place in our country for vigilante activities," Adm. Souers said, and called the Subversives Control Act "confused and unworkable."

AFTER RETURNING to business, he was chairman of the board of an Atlanta, Ga., linen service corporation, and

a partner in extensive farming and mercantile operations, as well as being a director of General American Life.

For many years Adm. Souers maintained a suite at the old Wardman Park Hotel here. He was a member of the Army Navy, Metropolitan, and Chevy Chase Country Clubs.

He is survived by his wife, the former Sylvia Nettell, whom he married in 1943.